

Message Text

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43

ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 SCS-03 SCA-01 L-03 SY-10 H-03 INR-10

RSR-01 RSC-01 /051 W

----- 107977

R 171400Z JUL 73

FM AMEMBASSY TANANARIVE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5470

C O N F I D E N T I A L TANANARIVE 968

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: CASC, MA, US

SUBJ: REPPAS

REF: TANANARIVE 0940

1. CONSOFF VISITED REPPAS 17JUL. REPPAS LAUNCHED ALMOST IMMEDIATELY INTO DENUNCIATION OF STATE DEPARTMENT FOR HAVING DONE NOTHING TO HELP HIM. THEN ANNOUNCED THAT HE WAS SERIOUSLY CONSIDERING ESCAPING. PROCEEDED TO GIVE CONSOFF HAND-WRITTEN NOTES. FIRST OF THESE STATED THAT COURT IS OBVIOUSLY BIASED AND WILL RULE UNFAVORABLY, THEREFORE NECESSITY OF ESCAPE. IN SUCH EVENT COULD ONE BE JUDGED IN ABSENTIA? SECONDLY, HIS GREEK CO-DEFENDANT BACOPOULOS IS BEING MOVED TO POORLY GUARDED HOSPITAL AFTER COMPLAINING ABOUT NON-EXISTENT ILLNESS. COULD EMBASSY ARRANGE SIMILAR TRANSFER FOR HIM?

2. CONSOFF INFORMED REPPAS THAT POSSIBILITIES OF ESCAPE WOULD BE SLIM, THAT HE COULD BE SHOT IN ATTEMPT, AND WOULD FIND IT DIFFICULT TO LEAVE MADAGASCAR AS FUGITIVE WITHOUT PASSPORT. REPPAS DISMISSED THESE OBJECTIONS, SAYING THAT ANYTHING BETTER THAN POSSIBLE SENTENCE OF TEN YEARS HARD LABOR WHICH HIS LAWYER RAVONY MENTIONED ON HIS LAST VISIT (REFTEL). REPPAS POINTED OUT HE IS PILOT AND HAS FRIENDS WITH AIRPLANES.

3. FYI: EMBASSY WOULD LIKE TO CONSIDER REPPAS' STATEMENTS AS MERELY LOOSE TALK, BUT VERY LAX SECURITY AT PRISON AND REPPAS NATURE MAKE SCHEME DEFINITE POSSIBILITY. PRISON SYSTEM IS
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FAIRLY LIBERAL WITH UNLOCKED CELLS AND ONE NOT VERY HIGH WALL

SEPARATING INMATES FROM OUTSIDE. ONE EARLIER OCCASION REPPAS
TOLD CONSOFF HE HAD NEVER SEEN ANY PRISONER MISTREATED BY
PRISON STAFF.MENDENHALL

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NNN

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